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# Capt. DUNHAM's Funeral Oration.

A

# Funeral Oration

ON

## *GEORGE WASHINGTON,*

LATE GENERAL OF THE ARMIES

OF THE

*UNITED STATES.*

PRONOUNCED, AT OXFORD, MASSACHUSETTS, AT THE REQUEST OF THE FIELD OFFICERS OF THE BRIGADE STATIONED AT THAT PLACE, ON THE 15TH JAN. 1800; IT BEING THE DAY DEVOTED TO THE FUNERAL HONORS OF THEIR DEPARTED CHIEF, PURSUANT TO GENERAL ORDERS FROM THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

BY JOSIAH DUNHAM, A. M.
CAPT. 16TH U. S. REGIMENT.

"O what a fall was there, my Countrymen!
"We ne'er shall look upon his like again."

SHAKESPEAR.

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OXFORD, *January* 21, 1800.

*SIR,*

WE having had the honor to be appointed a Committee in behalf of the Officers of the 14th, 15th, and 16th Regiments of the United States Infantry, do preſent you our warmeſt acknowledgments for your excellent EULOGY, delivered on the 15th inſt. in honor of the late illuſtrious *General* GEORGE WASHINGTON; and aſſure you, Sir, of the high ſenſations of pleaſure with which they heard your able delineation of that exalted character—and requeſt of you a copy of the ſame for the preſs.

SIMEON DRAPER, *Capt. 14th U. S. Regt.*
JOHN TOLMAN, *Capt. 14th U. S. Regt.*
NATHANIEL BALCH, *Capt. 15th U. S. Regt.*
ELI FORBES, *Capt. 15th U. S. Regt.*
WILLIAM WOODWARD, *Capt. 16th U. S. Regt.*
JACOB ALLEN, *Lieut. 14th U. S. Regt.*
JESSE LULL, *Lieut. 16th U. S. Regt.*

} Committee.

*Capt.* J. DUNHAM, *16th U. S. Regt.*

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OXFORD, *January* 22, 1800.

*GENTLEMEN,*

YOUR polite acknowledgments for the EULOGY, pronounced on the 15th inſt. and the requeſt for its publication, with which you have honored me, are certainly flattering. I can think of no apology to offer. The copy is yours. With the moſt reſpectful conſideration, I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,
J. DUNHAM.

*The* COMMITTEE *from the Officers of the 14th, 15th, and 16th Regiments, ſtationed at Oxford.*

# Funeral Oration.

*Americans!*

THE Sun of our glory has ſet forever;—WASHINGTON IS NO MORE!!—The pride of *Columbia* has fallen! He that was mighty among the valiant has failed! The glory has departed from ISRAEL; and the tents of *Cuſhan* are in affliction!

AFFLICTING and painful indeed muſt be that event, which has clad *five millions* of people in mourning, and filled a nation with tears: an event, which has, at once, bid the pipe and the tabor to ceaſe in our land; which has turned our joys into ſorrow, and our mirth into heavineſs: an event, which robbed *America* of her boaſt, *Humanity* of her pride, and has electrified the *World* with aſtoniſhment and grief. And, is it not ſingular, nay, is it not beyond all parallel, that this intereſting, this extraordinary event is no more than *the death of* ONE MAN?

"O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
"We ne'er ſhall look upon his like again."

WHEN I contemplate the ſolemnity of the occaſion which has brought us together, ſtruck with a pious awe and veneration for the illuſtrious

trious Character, whoſe *manes* we are about to entomb, I ſhrink from the holy theme, and would fain evade the taſk this day aſſigned me. Emboldened, however, by a ſenſe of duty, I will humbly purſue, with others, the delightful, yet beaten track, where, though novelty will not ſurpriſe, yet neither *praiſe* can ſurfeit, nor *eulogy* be exhauſted. Pardon me, *venerable Shade!* if, with unequal ſtep, and unhallowed feet, I tread the ſacred ground.

To attempt a complete portrait of this GREAT MAN, would be in vain. It is a taſk reſerved for the genius of future ages: a taſk, which will engroſs the talents of the poet, the painter, the biographer, and hiſtorian, when the names of GEORGE, of LEWIS, of FREDERICK, and of PAUL, would have been long ſince forgotten, had they not have *vegetated* on a throne, in the ſame era in which WASHINGTON lived.

To enumerate all thoſe exploits, which have ſtamped his character and immortalized his memory, would be to narrate every incident of his life, from the cradle to the tomb—to ſwell volume upon volume, till *the world itſelf could not contain the books which ſhould be written.* They exhibit one uniform ſcene of goodneſs, greatneſs, and ſublimity—one bright *galaxy* of glory, which, in a comparative view, darkens and eclipſes the brighteſt perfections of all who have gone before him.

IT was WASHINGTON, who reared our infant country from a ſtate of childhood and weakneſs, to that of manhood and ſtrength; from a ſtate of bondage and oppreſſion, to that of freedom and independence; from a ſtate of anarchy, war, and miſery, to that of order, peace, and happineſs. It was WASHINGTON, who confirmed to us the poſſeſſion of this *American Canaan*; who, through a *wilderneſs* of dangers, and a *Red Sea* of blood, ſtood, under GOD, OUR SHELTERING CLOUD BY DAY, AND OUR PILLAR OF FIRE BY NIGHT. He it was, who ſeated us beneath the ſhadow of the peaceful *olive*; who converted our *ſwords into ploughſhares, and our ſpears into pruning-hooks*; who *gave us to eat of the trees* of Light and Liberty, in this our political *Paradiſe*. Like yon bright ORB OF DAY, when not a cloud obſcures the vaſt horizon around, he has riſen and ſhone with genial ſplendor and unborrowed majeſty; while kings, potentates, and princes, have ſhrunk abaſhed from his preſence, and, like the twinkling ſtars of night, hid their diminiſhed heads.

AT the commencement of our Revolution, when the dark ſtorm was gathering and burſting upon us; when the iron tempeſt of war was already howling in our ears; when the galling chains of *Slavery* were riveting on our heels; when not a gleam of light nor a ray of hope could be diſcerned through the impenetrable gloom that enveloped our country; when

*Deſpair* was our ſecret companion, and *the ſons of little men were afraid*;—then it was, that the ſame STAR which once ſtood over *Bethlehem*, and guided the WISE MEN of the *Eaſt* to the place of our SAVIOUR's birth, now ſtood over *Mount Vernon*, and conducted the WISE MEN of the *Weſt* to the abode of our *political Saviour*.

COMPARE WASHINGTON (if their characters will admit of compariſon) with the heroes, the patriots, the ſages, the legiſlators of antiquity. View him in all his important relations to himſelf, to his country, and to his GOD. Do we not find him as much their ſuperior, as the golden SUN is ſuperior to the ſwift meteor of night, or to the dim luſtre of the rayleſs *mock-ſun* in the circumambient cloud?

As a Hero, compare him with CROMWELL, with CÆSAR, with ALEXANDER. Alas! where is their greatneſs? what were their virtues?—Curſe on *ſuch* virtues—they have undone their country! CROMWELL, with ſacrilegious zeal, deſtroyed a throne to enthrone himſelf. CÆSAR, with electric rapidity, ſubdued nations; but "CÆSAR was ambitious"—he enſlaved an empire! ALEXANDER, meanly brave, and wretchedly victorious, wantonly overran the world, laid waſte the faireſt portion of humanity, and, with undiſcriminating madneſs and fury, cried, "*Havoc! and let ſlip the dogs of war*" among the nobleſt works of GOD!

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON fought—not to conquer, but to defend; not to ruin the foe, but to protect his people; not to enſlave a country, but to free, to bleſs, and to build up a nation—to eſtabliſh it on the broad baſis of equal rights, under the enjoyment of *Liberty*, and under the protection of *Law*.

AT the birth of our *Independence*, in the days which *tried men's ſouls*, when every hand was weak, and every heart faint, who, like WASHINGTON, could have united all hearts, and ſtrengthened all hands? Who, like HIM, could have riſen ſuperior to all the trials, perplexities, and dangers, which, like a dark cloud, hovered over us, and threatened our political exiſtence? Who elſe could have combined the varying intereſts, reconciled diverſe opinions, and ſoothed the diſcordant paſſions, with which our infant country was torn, paralyſed, and convulſed? Who, but WASHINGTON, could have ſtept forward, with prudence, fortitude and zeal, to command as well the affections as the confidence of trembling millions? Who, like HIM, without the weakneſſes, which depreciate, or the vices, which diſgrace human nature, could have diſplayed all the virtues, and all the talents, which ennoble man, or adorn the hero? Who, but WASHINGTON, amidſt the contending elements of our revolution, with modeſt dignity, and unbaffled ſkill, could have *rode upon the whirlwind and directed the ſtorm?* Always calm and

and ſerene, always firm and inflexible, always prompt and decided—in ſhort, always HIMSELF, he has been found prepared for every event, and adequate to every truſt.

IT was his perſevering prudence, his cautious circumſpection, his unparalleled moderation, which, in our revolutionary war, out-generaled Britiſh ſkill, and eventually turned the ſcale, which long had poiſed dubious. Gradually weakening and wearing out the enemy, while his own army was diſciplining, and his own reſources increaſing, at length,

"He gain'd, like FABIUS, by delay."

THOUGH intrepid as HANNIBAL, and fortunate as CÆSAR, yet mildneſs and humanity were prominent traits in his character. *He never pierced a fallen foe!*

AFTER eight years' faithful and gratuitous ſervice, at the head of our victorious armies, he cheerfully ſacrificed, upon the ALTAR of his grateful country, the mighty harveſt of laurels he had won, and great, like CINCINNATUS, returned to the plough—to the exerciſe of his domeſtic virtues, and, the ever favorite object of his heart, the cultivation of the ſoft arts of peace. WONDERFUL MAN!—*Here was a ſight the* GODS *beheld with pleaſure!* Like the *Hero* of OSSIAN, *he was terrible in the battles of his ſteel. His ſword was like lightning in the field; his voice like thunder on the diſtant hills. Many fell by his arm; they were conſumed in the flames of his wrath!*

*But*

*But when he returned from the war, how* PEACEFUL WAS HIS BROW! *His face was like* the SUN *after rain; like* the MOON *in the ſilence of the night; calm as the breaſt of the lake, when the loud wind is laid!*

ONCE more called from his philoſophic retreat, in the ſhades of *Mount Vernon*, by the unanimous voice of his country, to the adminiſtration of a government, in the formation of whoſe Conſtitution he was himſelf an important agent, who will pretend to ſay, that his virtues or his talents ſhone leſs conſpicuouſly in the cabinet, than in the field? Unverſed in the policy and intrigues of courts, untaught in the theoretical ſpeculations of fire-ſide philoſophers, and unacquainted with the metaphyſical jargon of ſchool-bred politicians, he poſſeſſed a thorough, and an intuitive knowledge of the human heart. Superior to SOLON or LYCURGUS, he was that ſelf-taught *Sage*, that Heaven-inſpired patriot and legiſlator, who clearly comprehended all the ſprings and all the motives of human nature and human actions. He underſtood not only thoſe principles, which conſtitute the intereſts, the relations, and the dependencies, mutually ſubſiſting between man and man; but his ideas were as extended as the vaſt empire of *Reaſon*; ſo that a knowledge of the relative *intereſts* of his country, with regard to foreign nations, and of the meaſures, which would moſt effectually promote and ſecure them, were perfectly

ſectly familiar to his capacious mind. Suffice it to ſay, that from THESE *intereſts*, during an eight years' Preſidency, in a period as eventful and dangerous as war itſelf, he was never once known to ſwerve. When *theſe* appeared permanently ſecured, after having bequeathed us the rich LEGACY of his laſt counſel, and having reſigned the helm of government to a SUCCESSOR WORTHY OF HIMSELF, he *again retired*, laden with the benedictions of his country, to the boſom of his family—to his native walks, and tranquil ſhades:—fondly hoping to devote the evening of his days, and the laſt glimmerings of life's feeble lamp, to the enjoyment of his friends, and the ſervice of his GOD.

WOULD to *Heaven*, it had been thus!—But, alas! the neutral rights of our country are invaded, our commerce is plundered, our citizens inſulted, and our government abuſed; and again behold the HERO *clad in arms!* His ſword is drawn, his bow is bent, and he once more ſtands, though in a ſubordinate ſphere, the pride, the ſtrength, the bulwark of his country! VENERABLE HERO! ſuch haſt thou been.——

IN the private character of WASHINGTON, we find the delight, the ornament, the wonder of man! Prompt at every call of duty, in whatever ſphere or ſtation, he exhibits a uniform pattern of morality, induſtry and economy. Feelingly alive to all the tender charities of our nature, he always *clothed the naked*, and *filled the*

*hungry*

*hungry with good things.* He ſoothed affliction, commiſerated misfortune, raiſed up the bowed down, diſſipated the dark clouds of the diſconſolate, or gilded their gloom with the calm ſunſhine of peace. VENERABLE OLD MAN! ſuch were thy perfections, that "the tongue of *Slander* never dared to impeach the purity of thy conduct; nor the eye of *Envy* to raiſe its malignant glance to the elevation of thy virtues." And ſuch was the gratitude and affections of thy countrymen, that not a ſigh nor a prayer, from their boſoms, eſcaped to Heaven, but what was "winged with *benizons*" *for* THEE!

GREAT as HE was in life, he was ſtill more ſublimely grand and majeſtic in DEATH. See him on his dying couch—Calm and dignified in diſtreſs, he has *fought the good fight*, and DEATH TO HIM HAS NO TERRORS!!—With *his own firm hand* HE CLOSES HIS EYES——and is gone!—*His form is now no more the terror of the valiant. Dim and feeble is the Chief, who travelled in ſtrength and brightneſs before. He reſts in the dark and narrow houſe of the tomb. The feeble will find his bow at home, but they will not be able to bend it. Fallen is the arm of battle! Deep is the ſleep of the dead; low their pillow of duſt; damp and cold the couch of their repoſe. When, Oh, when will it be morn in the grave to bid the ſlumberer awake! Farewel, thou firſt in every field, farewel!—The field ſhall behold thee no more; no more the dark wood be lightened with the ſplendor of thy ſteel.*

THOU

THOU HAST LEFT NO SON ;—*but the ſong ſhall preſerve thy name. Future times ſhall hear of* THEE. *The ſons of* COLUMBIA *ſhall be ſad, and the tear of the young virgin will fall!* And well may we weep——

" Quis deſiderio ſit pudor, aut modus,
" Tam cari capitis ?"————

BUT, my countrymen ! while we are paying this laſt ſad tribute of reſpect to the *aſhes* of our dear departed CHIEF ; while we entomb his *relics* in the earth, and inurn his memory in our hearts,—let us not forget to emulate his virtues in our lives. The huſband, the parent, the friend, the neighbor, the citizen, the chriſtian, or the man, can never deſerve higher eulogy than this,—that his deportment, in his appropriate ſphere, reſembles that of a WASHINGTON.

A FRIEND to our holy *Religion*, he was ever guided by its pious doctrines, and had embraced the tenets of the *Epiſcopal Church* ; yet his charity, unbounded as his immortal mind, led him equally to reſpect every denomination of the followers of JESUS. Meek and diſtruſtful of himſelf, he was liberal and candid to others. Superior to the little prejudices which ſubſiſt among different ſects—prejudices, which deform the beauty and deſtroy the harmony of the religious world, he *loved*, and *wept*, and *prayed*—for ALL.

IN

IN his MASONIC CHARACTER was exemplified an *Encyclopedia* of *Maſonic* virtues. Long has he ſtood a majeſtic *column* in the bright temple of perfection. Let every *Maſon* labor by his example—he will find REFRESHMENT in the *ſouth*, and his REWARD in the *weſt*. He will ſoon reach the *high meridian* of excellence, and be admitted into the inner chamber of that TEMPLE, which is *made without hands*. There he will again *behold his Maſter ;*—there he will meet and embrace his *Brother*,

"In that Grand Lodge, that's far awa'."

IN his *military* career, we find diſplayed all that is great and ſublime in the SOLDIER. Let the *youthful Warrior* read his life ; let it be his darling theme by day, and his meditation by night ; let him ſtudy his example and copy his virtues, and he will be great, he will be immortal !

THE war-worn veteran, who, with him in danger, has long *borne the burden and heat of the day*, crowned with LAURELS of unfading green, will at length reſt with him in that world, where *wars* and toils can never come.

TRUE, my companions in arms, we have loſt our *Leader !* To US this affliction is peculiarly painful and diſtreſſing. Let this conſole us—that he has gone before us to receive the reward of his labors—to join the worthy band of patriots and heroes, who fought and *bled* by his ſide.

BEHOLD him, like ELIJAH, aſcending to *heaven* in the bright chariot of his glory! Well may we exclaim, with the forſaken ELISHA, "*My father! my father! The chariot of* ISRAEL, *and the horſemen thereof!*"

IN whatever point of view we conſider this GREAT MAN, we ſtill find him to have been *a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths.* Our MOSES in the wilderneſs, our SAMSON in the field, and our SOLOMON in counſel. "Firſt in war, firſt in peace, and firſt in the affections of his country." But, alas! he was a *beam that has failed;* and will not darkneſs now gather on our land? Though his departure was in renown, yet who knows but it is the LOUD HARBINGER of approaching calamity? Who can tell what may be the next page in the vaſt volume of futurity? Written by the finger of GOD, who maketh *darkneſs his pavilion*, who can tell, whether it be in letters of *gold*, or in characters of *blood?* Who knows, but that, even now, *the dawn* of our national glory *is overcaſt;* that the *morning* of our political happineſs already *lowers;* that the loud tempeſt of our country's *ruin* is collecting around us; that the war of contending elements, and the terrible thunders of *Mount Sinai*, are ready to burſt upon our heads; and that WASHINGTON, ever the peculiar care of HEAVEN, is now ſnatched from among the victims of vengeance, into ABRAHAM's boſom, as a refuge from the impending ſtorm?

BLESSED be the GOD of our fathers! IT IS NOT SO!—No—he was ſent to work out our political *ſalvation*; he has accompliſhed his miſſion; he has finiſhed his work; and he is now hearing pronounced that glorious *Euge*—"*Well done! good and faithful ſervant! enter thou into the joys of thy* LORD!"

LIKE the good prophet of old, he has left his *mantle* behind him, and lo! it reſts on ELISHA! We have an ADAMS in the cabinet; we have a HAMILTON in the field! Our land will ſtill be bleſt. We have both the precepts and example of WASHINGTON to guide us. He will ſtill continue to be our *guardian angel*; and may we not hope for his interceſſion with HIM, *who doeth his will in the* ARMIES OF HEAVEN?

HE is not dead, but removed—removed from *Mount Vernon* below, to *Mount Zion* above.

"From *Vernon*'s Mount behold the Hero riſe!
Reſplendent forms attend him through the ſkies!
The ſhades of war-worn veterans round him throng,
And lead, enwrapt, their honor'd Chief along!
A laurel wreath th' immortal WARREN bears,
An arch triumphal MERCER's hand prepares;
Young LAWRENCE, erſt th' avenging bolt of war,
With port majeſtic, guides the glittering car;
MONTGOMERY's godlike form directs the way,
And GREEN unfolds the gates of endleſs day;
While Angels, "trumpet-tongued," proclaim through air,
"Due honors for the FIRST OF MEN prepare!"

BEHOLD the venerable form of the HERO, diffidently meek and majeſtic, approach the throne of GOD! See him, with tearful ſolicitude, ſublimely

limely bending, to implore protection for his darling country; while the *marſhalled hoſts* of heaven are drawn up in regular *battalia*, to welcome, with *preſented arms*, the immortal ſtranger; while Saints, Seraphs, and Archangels, in harmonious concert, ſhout—"HE COMES! HE COMES!—THE HERO COMES!"

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## *Poſtſcript.*

POSSIBLY, he who takes pains to read this, may ſuſpect a *lack* of "inverted commas." But, be aſſured, the AUTHOR is no *Plagiary*. Such alluſions, or quotations, as ſeemed appropriate, were ſeized with avidity, without regard to their origin; and in many inſtances, the AUTHOR himſelf does not know, nor does he care, whether they were borrowed or original. He has left it with the READER, whether *critical* or *uncritical*, to inſert *quotations* wherever he pleaſes, and to give *credit to whom credit is due*.

ONE remark may, with propriety, be made;—that the *Funeral Orator* of WASHINGTON, to ſay any thing *new* on the ſubject, *muſt not* EULOGIZE, *but* DEFAME.